

# Equality & Diversity in Shetland – Staff Questionnaire

## Analysis of Consultation Responses

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## **1. Introduction and Background**

### **1.1 Introduction**

The following report details the responses to Shetland Islands Council's Equality and Diversity Consultation, which took place in November and December of 2010. The consultation was made up of two questionnaires, one sent to all Shetland Islands Council (SIC) staff, and another targeted at the wider community. Questions differed in focus between the two surveys. This report forms one part of the consultation response; the "staff consultation". The "community consultation" forms the second report.

The following details the information provided in each section of this report:

- Section 1 provides some background to the consultation, describes why the consultation was carried out, and details the recent changes to equality legislation and what that means for local authorities;
- Section 2 provides a breakdown of the respondents to the Staff Questionnaire. The breakdown is in terms of a respondents' gender, race, age, sexual orientation, their religion or beliefs and whether they have a disability;
- Section 3 provides an overview of quantitative responses, under each protected characteristic (gender, disability, race, age, sexual orientation, and religion and belief); and
- Section 4 provides an overview of the qualitative responses; the issues and challenges, and what is working" in terms of equality in the Shetland community

The Policy Unit, at the Shetland Islands Council would like to thank all of those who responded to the survey, and the agencies that helped in the consultation process.

### **1.2 Background**

The purpose of the SIC Staff Equality and Diversity Consultation 2010 was to seek any gaps in equality within the Council's workforce. Shetland Islands Council needs to ensure that equality outcomes are based on evidence and involvement of equality groups and communities, and also to improve on the SIC's equalities monitoring of the SIC's workforce.

### **1.3 The Equality Act 2010**

The Equality Act 2010, which aims to support progress on equality by harmonising and strengthening all previous discrimination law, extends the previous strands of antidiscrimination (race, gender and disability) to produce what is now known as "protected characteristics". The characteristics, which are now protected under equality law, are:

- Gender (and Pregnancy and Maternity);
- Disability;
- Race;
- Age;
- Sexual Orientation (and Gender Reassigned); and
- Religion and Belief.

The Equality Act 2010 states that Local Authorities must have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act;
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

## 1.4 The Consultation

The Equality Act 2010 covers a wider number of protected characteristics than previous discrimination law, therefore the Council, through consultation, has sought to fill the gaps in data (both qualitative and quantitative) to inform Shetland's equality outcomes.

The questionnaire was targeted at all Council staff,

The staff questionnaire was made up of six sections, each focusing on one of the protected characteristics detailed in Section 1.3 above. Questions sought to identify any issues and areas for improvement within each of the survey sections.

## 2 Breakdown of Respondents

A total of 476 questionnaires were returned during the consultation process. Respondents were given the option to skip questions, answering those only relevant to them. Therefore there was a variation in the number of respondents answering each section.

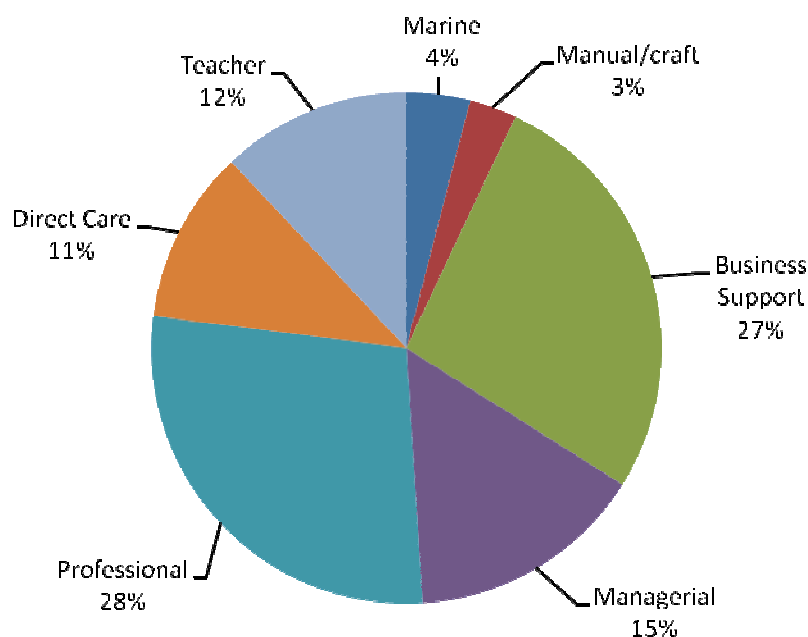
- 272 individuals answered the section relating to Gender equality;
- 140 individuals answered the section relating to Disability equality;
- 157 individuals answered the section relating to Race equality;
- 254 individuals answered the section relating to Age equality;
- 136 individuals answered the section relating to Sexual Orientation equality; and
- 158 individuals answered the section relating to equality in Religion and Belief.

Since the implementation of Single Status the Council does not have details of staff groupings as staff are either categorised as Local Government Employees (LGE), or Teachers, Lecturers or Instructors. However, from the Quarterly Joint Staffing Watch figures from September 2010, the following Full Time Equivalent (FTE) breakdown by category is available:

**Table 1: Full Time Equivalent (FTE) breakdown of SIC staff by Category**

Category	FTE	Percentage
Education: Teachers	415	14.62%
Education: Other Staff	400	14.09%
Social Work	871	30.69%
Other Staff	1053	37.10%
Construction Staff	99	3.49%

The survey asked respondents to state which category best described their job, the results are summarised in Table 1 below. There are a wide range of professions represented.



**Table 1: Occupational Category of all SIC staff**

65% of respondents were Female, with 35% Male. The Council's workforce comprises 70% Female and 30% Male, so the survey responses represent the gender profile of the Council.

Of the 165 individuals completing the disability section of the staff survey:

- 76% described themselves as not have a disability;
- 16% described themselves as having a disability;
- 7% were carers for those with disabilities, and
- 1% were members of a disability group or organisation.

This compares favourably with the Disability profile of Council staff: 6.41% of staff declared they have a disability and 4.86% did not disclose.

Of the 174 individuals that completed the race section of the staff survey:

- The majority described themselves as white (92%);
- Only 1% were of black or mixed race; and
- 7% of respondents preferred not to answer.

254 individuals completed the age section of the staff survey, with representation from all age groups. The table below compares the age range of those who completed the survey against the workforce of the Council. This is generally similar and therefore gives a good comparison to the Council workforce age range.

**Table 2: Age profile of survey respondents compared with the workforce of the Council**

Age Range	Survey	Workforce
Under 21	2%	4%
Under 25	3%	7%
25-30	11%	10%
31-40	24%	21%
41-50	27%	27%
51-60	26%	23%
61-69	7%	7%
Over 69	1%	1%

Of the 136 individuals answering questions relating to sexual orientation:

- 3% described themselves as bisexual;

- 5% described themselves as gay;
- 85% described themselves as heterosexual; and
- 8% preferred not to answer.

A wide number of religions were represented in the 158 individuals completing the section relating to religion and belief.

- The following religions/beliefs were represented: Buddhist, Church of Scotland, Humanist, Jewish, Other Christian, Pagan, and Roman Catholic.
- 34% answered as having no religion, 8% preferred not to answer, and the remaining 59% identified a particular religion or belief.
- The religions Church of Scotland and 'other Christian' were the most prevalent in (26% and 19% respectively).

The Council does not hold staff information on Sexual Orientation, or Religion/Belief, therefore it is not possible to make a comparison for those characteristics.

### 3. Summary of General Questions

The following section provides an overview of questions that featured under each protected characteristic.

Section 4 provides an overview of the issues and challenges summarised into each protected characteristic.

#### Summary

The majority of the staff feel that the Council is good at promoting equalities and that discrimination is a problem within the Council.

12.6% of respondents (33 staff) felt discriminated against during their employment within the Council because of their Gender.

30% of respondents (15 staff) felt that reasonable adjustments were not made to accommodate their disability during employment with the Council.

7 respondents felt that their gender had a negative impact on taking part in training or developing their learning potential. 8 individuals also felt that their age has a negative impact.

The majority of respondents were against monitoring of staff sexual orientation and religion/belief, 75.3% and 65.1% respectively.

14% of respondents (37 staff) felt that the Council did not promote gender equality, 69% (182 staff) thought it was promoted to a satisfactory level; and 16% (44 staff) thought it was actively promoted.

20% of female respondents (50 staff), and 18% of male respondents (37 staff) felt that there were obstacles that prevent both men and women in a parenting role continuing their employment with the Council.

### 3.1 Areas of Interest

At the beginning of each section, each respondent was given the option to answer the questions in that section or allow them to move onto the next section. This information can be used to assess the areas which people feel are the most important to them.

The table below summarises which areas staff wished to answer questions on:

**Table 3: Percentage of respondents who wished to answer questions relating to each protected characteristic (i.e. those who answered yes), and percentage of those who skipped each section (i.e. those who answered no).**

	Gender	Disability	Race	Age	Sexual Orientation	Religion / Belief
Yes	62.5%	35.0%	40.5%	65.5%	36.6%	42.9%
No	37.5%	65.0%	59.5%	34.5%	63.4%	57.1%

In the case of Age and Gender, more staff wished to answer questions on those areas than not, while for Disability, Sexual Orientation and Religion/Belief only 35% - 43% of respondents chose to answer.

### 3.2 Being Treated Fairly When Looking for Work, or for Gaining Promotion

All sections began with a question that asked staff if they felt they had been discriminated against in terms of seeking employment or for gaining a promotion in regards to their gender, disability, race, age, sexual orientation and religion or belief.

For each of the protected characteristics, the majority of respondents said they had never felt discriminated against during their employment with the Council.

The table below shows the percentages for each protected characteristic:

**Table 4: Percentage of respondents who have (or have not) felt discriminated against in terms of seeking employment or gaining a promotion in regards to a number of protected characteristics**

Characteristic	Yes	No
Gender	8.8%	91.2%
Disability	9.5%	50%
Race	5.4%	94.6%
Age	11.9%	88.1%
Sexual Orientation	0.7%	91.9%
Religion/Beliefs	1.2%	92.9%

Of the 8.8% that felt discriminated against in terms of seeking employment/gaining a promotion in regards to their **gender**:

- 44.4% (8 individuals) said they had felt discriminated against whilst in interview; and
- 55.6% (10 individuals) felt discriminated against because of the recruitment decision that was made on the job that they applied for.

Of the 9.5% that felt discriminated against in terms of seeking employment/gaining a promotion in regards to their **disability**:

- 9.1% (1 individual) felt that there were no suitable positions;
- 9.1% (1 individual) said that they had difficulties with the job application form;
- 9.1% (1 individual) said that the Council would not accommodate their needs during the interview process;
- 18.2% (2 individuals) felt discriminated against because of the recruitment decision that was made on the job that they applied for; and
- 54.6% (6 individuals) said that the Council would not accommodate their needs whilst in employment with the Council.

Of the 5.4% that felt discriminated against in terms of seeking employment/gaining a promotion in regards to their **race**:

- 100% (5 individuals) felt discriminated against because of the recruitment decision that was made on the job that they applied for.

Of the 11.9% that felt discriminated against in terms of seeking employment/gaining a promotion in regards to their **age**:

- 22.7% (5 individuals) felt discriminated against whilst in interview; and
- 77.3% (17 individuals) felt discriminated against because of the recruitment decision that was made on the job that they applied for.

Of the 0.7% that felt discriminated against in terms of seeking employment/gaining a promotion in regards to their **sexual orientation**:

- 100% (1 individual) felt discriminated against because of the recruitment decision that was made on the job that they applied for.

Of the 1.2% that felt discriminated against in terms of seeking employment/gaining a promotion in regards to their **religion or beliefs**:

- 100% (1 individual) felt discriminated against whilst in interview.

**3.3 Being Treated Fairly at Work**

Staff were asked to indicate whether they had ever felt discriminated against during their employment with the Council, in relation to each of the protected characteristics.

The table below summarises the responses:

**Table 5: Percentage of respondents who have (or have not) felt discriminated against during their employment with the Council**

	Yes	No
Gender	12.7%	87.3%
Race	6.8%	93.2%
Age	7.9%	92.1%
Sexual Orientation	2.0%	98.0%
Religion/Belief	2.4%	97.6%

It would appear that the characteristic which staff feel most discriminated against is Gender with 12.6% (33 staff) feeling they had been discriminated against. Age and Race is lower, at 7% and 8%, and Sexuality and Religion/Belief very low at around 2%.

Comments from staff feeling discriminated against because of their gender included:

- Being a mother of a child is a barrier to promotion;
- Poor male/female balance when it comes to employee benefits (i.e. maternity/paternity and reduced working hours);
- Women have to work harder to prove their worth; and
- Have felt in a vulnerable position whilst on maternity leave.

Comments from staff feeling discriminated against because of their race included:

- Not being from Shetland: “I have got picked on because I was a soothmother”; and
- Being a Shetlander: “Shetlanders don’t seem to get any high up officials’ jobs. They are mostly given to incomers.”

Comments from staff feeling discriminated against because of their age included:

- Young people aren’t given jobs as they are deemed to be overqualified (i.e. degree) and under experienced in the workplace, and this puts us in a catch 22 situation; and

- I have been told that further training would be a waste of time at this stage in my career.

There was a slightly different question in relation to Disability, in order to determine if reasonable adjustments had been made to accommodate an employee’s disability during employment with the Council. Those responses are summarised below:

**Table 6: Percentage (and numbers) of respondents who felt that reasonable adjustments had been (or had not been) made to accommodate their disability during employment with the Council**

	Yes	No
Disability	70% (35)	30% (15)

Comments relating to why individuals felt that reasonable adjustments had not been made to accommodate their disability during employment included:

- Being dyslexic, employer was reluctant to support me in getting the right equipment and materials to ensure I was not struggling;
- My disabled colleague experienced difficulty in finding secure employment within the Council;
- Lack of understanding of mental health; and
- Purchase request for equipment denied, and asked to work from home rather than affect an open plan office.

### 3.4 Training and Developing Full Learning Potential

Staff were asked if they felt their opportunity to take part in training or develop their full learning potential had been affected by a protected characteristic:

- 2.8% (seven staff) thought that their gender had negatively impacted on this, while no-one thought that their gender had a positive impact.
- 3.2% (eight staff) felt that their age had a negative impact, while 1.6% (four staff) thought their age had had a positive impact.
- With regard to Sexual Orientation, of the staff who responded, no-one thought that their sexuality had impacted on this, either negatively or positively.
- 1.2% (two staff) thought that their religion/belief had had a negative impact, while no-one thought it had had a positive impact.

### 3.5 Monitoring of Protected Characteristics

Staff were asked whether they felt that the Council should ask individuals to disclose information on their protected characteristics on the Employee Equal Opportunities Monitoring forms. The table below summarises the responses:

**Table 7: Percentage of staff that felt the Council should (or should not) ask individuals to disclose information on the following protected characteristics: disability, sexual orientation and religion/belief.**

	Yes	No
Disability	83.3%	16.7%
Sexual Orientation	24.7%	75.3%
Religion/Belief	34.9%	65.1%

A high proportion of staff felt that the Equal Opportunities Monitoring form should ask for employees disability, however, three quarters of respondents thought that Sexual Orientation should not be asked for. Similarly, 65% thought that Religion/Belief should not be asked for.

### 3.6 Promotion of Gender Equality

Staff were asked whether they felt that the Council promoted Gender Equality, and to what level:

- 14% (37 staff) thought that the Council did not promote Gender Equality;
- 69% (182 staff) thought that it was promoted to a satisfactory level; and
- 16% (44 staff) thought that it was actively promoted.

### 3.7 Obstacles Preventing Parents Continuing their Employment with the Council

Staff were asked whether they felt that there are any obstacles that prevent both men and women in a parenting role continuing their employment with the Council. The table below summarises the responses:

**Table 8: Percentage of respondents who felt that there are (or are not) obstacles that prevent both men and women in a parenting role continuing their employment with the Council.**

	Yes	No	Not Sure
Women	20%	43%	37%
Men	18%	48%	34%

Nearly half of those who responded thought that there were no obstacles to the parenting role for both genders. However, **20% of female respondents (50 staff)** and **18% of male respondents (37 staff)** felt that there were obstacles that prevented individuals in a parenting role from continuing their employment.

### 3.8 Flexible arrangements for Religious Festivals/Days of Worship

We asked staff whether they had ever felt discriminated against in terms of taking advantage of flexible arrangements to accommodate time off for days of worship and religious festivals whilst in employment with the Council:

- 6.7% said that they had felt discriminated against in terms of taking advantage of flexible arrangements for days of worship or religious festivals, and
- 93.3% said that they had not.

## 4. Summary of Questions under Protected Characteristics

### 4.1 Gender

**91.2%** of respondents (271 staff) felt they had not been discriminated against in terms of seeking employment with the Council because of their Gender, or that their Gender had prevented them from gaining a promotion. **8.8%** (26 staff) felt that they had been. Reasons included:

- Strong bias for females in Social Work Management; and
- Concerns about the lack of opportunity for women generally.

Below are some of the other comments made in relation to gender:

- There is a lack of childcare/crèche facilities in some areas, particularly in rural areas of Shetland;
- Perceived discrepancies between services in relation to making up time after taking time off for sick dependants;
- Managing flexi-time can be difficult, but it is recognised as an employee benefit;

- Lack of flexibility when returning from Maternity, options are limited forcing some to resign from post;
- Men do not get enough time off when a baby is born, and more flexible benefits for childcare;
- Policies and Procedures are just paying lip service and hide the real issues; and
- Low number of men employed in Social Care and Social Care Management.

## 4.2 Disability

Of those who answered whether they felt the Council had made reasonable adjustments to accommodate disability, 70% (35 staff) thought that the Council had, while 30% (15 staff) did not, among the reasons were:

- Interviews are unfair; alternatives could be made, but not widely known;
- Not all Council buildings have appropriate wheelchair access;
- Perception that Management do not make necessary adjustments for disabilities, and that more effort could be made; and
- Mental Health is lagging well behind Physical Disabilities in people's knowledge and understanding.

## 4.3 Race

93.2% of respondents (151 staff) said they had felt discriminated against during their employment with the Council. 6.8% (11 staff) felt they had. The reasons given were whether staff were (or were not) from Shetland:

"It appears to me that Shetlanders face discrimination in gaining promotion"

"I have felt that the fact that I am not a Shetlander has gone against me in the way I have been treated"

The two quotes above suggest that there were two distinct, opposing themes, with both Shetlanders and non-Shetlanders feeling that preferential treatment was given to the other in terms of getting jobs within the Council.

A conclusion is that there is a perception amongst some of the Council workforce that recruitment to jobs with the Council is unfair, and that Policy and Procedures, particularly in relation to Equal Opportunities are not complied with. Appointments to posts are not perceived as based on merit.

## 4.4 Age

88.1% of respondents (229 staff) said they had not been discriminated against seeking employment, or promotion. 11.9% (31 staff) felt they had. Comments included:

- Told bluntly at interview that panel were surprised someone of my age would apply;
- Training not seen as important for older people; and
- Felt age counts against staff for getting recognition.

Other general comments with regard to age included:

- Perception that there are certain jobs which are aimed at certain ages. For example: children and youth services are generally staffed by young people and community care by older women;
- Training is not always encouraged for older staff members, with some managers favouring younger people for training opportunities;
- Assumption that older staff are stuck in their ways and are not be open to new ideas, or new legislation. For example, care standards;
- Management tend to assume younger is better;

- Younger people feel as though they are made to carry out menial tasks and are perceived to not know as much so are treated differently; and
- Highly qualified younger people struggle to gain employment due to lack of experience.

#### **4.5 Sexual Orientation**

99% of respondents (137 staff) felt that they had not been discriminated against in terms of seeking employment or promotion, with regard to their sexual orientation. 1% (1 staff member) felt they had.

98% (144 staff) felt that they had not been discriminated against during their employment with the Council because of their sexual orientation, 2% (3 staff) felt they had.

There were no comments from any individuals who had, themselves been discriminated against, however, a few respondents said that they had been witness to some sexual orientation discrimination.

The issue of positive discrimination was raised here, with a member of staff member feeling that a bias is in place to make up gay numbers of staff, without appointing on merit.

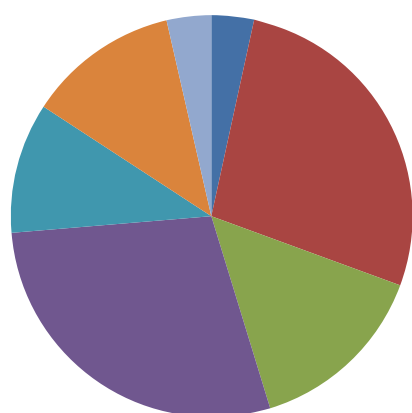
#### **4.6 Religion or Belief**

97.6% of respondents (163 staff) felt that they had not been discriminated against during their employment because of their Religion or Belief, 2.4% (4 staff) felt they had. Comments given were:

- Being forced to work on Good Friday and Easter Monday; and
- Having to participate in school assemblies.

## Appendix 1: Full Survey Analysis

Respondents were asked to indicate which category their current occupation fell into. The responses are summarised below:



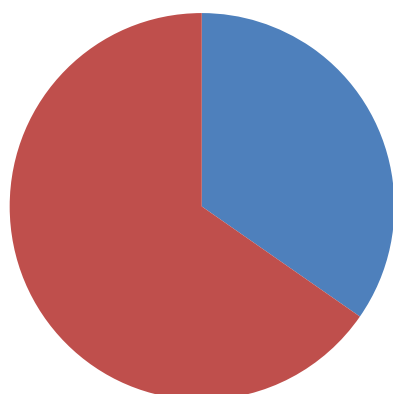
■ Manual/craft  
■ Business Support  
■ Managerial  
■ Professional  
■ Direct Care  
■ Teacher  
■ Marine

Occupational Area	Percentage	Number of Respondents
Manual/craft	3.4%	16
Business Support	27.2%	129
Managerial	14.7%	70
Professional	28.4%	135
Direct Care	10.5%	50
Teacher	12.2%	58
Marine	3.6%	17
<b>Total</b>		<b>475</b>

### GENDER

#### Breakdown of respondents

Respondents were asked to indicate which gender they were. The responses are below:



■ Male  
■ Female

Gender	Percentage	Number of Respondents
Male	34.7%	165
Female	65.3%	310
<b>Total</b>		<b>475</b>

#### Q1: Recruitment and Promotion

Respondents were asked if they had ever felt discriminated against in terms of seeking employment, or gaining promotion with the Council because of their GENDER (inc. pregnancy and maternity). The responses are below:

	Response Percent	Response Count
YES	8.8%	26
NO	91.2%	271
<b>Total</b>		<b>297</b>

They were then asked to indicate how they felt discriminated against. The following table summarises the responses

	Percentage	Number of Respondents
The job advertisement directly discriminated against my gender	0.0%	0
I have felt discriminated against whilst in an interview, because of my gender	44.4%	8
I have felt discriminated against regarding the recruitment decision that was made on the job that I applied for, because of my gender	55.6%	10
Other (please specify)		6
Total		24

Those who selected OTHER gave the following reasons:

- A strong bias exists in some workplaces. For example, the female majority social work management.
- My manager did not want me to change my job to part-time because she would find it difficult to recruit to the other half of my post. The difficulties were in training up someone to fill that post. I was "discouraged" from returning to work part-time after maternity leave.
- I was interviewed by two males and someone from HR. In the feedback on the telephone one of the males told me that they (the men) thought "I'd be good at looking after the grandmother", inferring I didn't have the drive or management 'gusto' needed for the post I'd applied for.
- Arrangements were made for an "acting up" position just before I came back off maternity leave. This was some time ago now and I understand there are now policies in place to formalise acting up and secondments so hopefully this won't happen again.

## Q2: Employment

Respondents were then asked if they had ever felt discriminated against during your employment with the council because of their gender.

	Response Percent	Response Count
YES	12.7%	33
NO	87.3%	226
Total		259

Those who said YES, comments were:

- Working in education and social care it is a predominately female led department. It is difficult for males to move into workplaces like this. Additionally, as a male myself, I feel that much care has to be taken not to offend female colleagues, yet the same respect is not returned by female workers. I constantly have to listen to female sexist comments.
- Gender and being a mother of a young child has always been a barrier.
- I often feel the benefits received by female workers are not balanced with those received by male colleagues.
- I was told that I would find it difficult to find promotion because of the fact that I might have more children.
- My immediate superior has issues with women in managerial/higher posts.
- As a woman I have to work harder to prove my worth.

- I felt discriminated when, working in the kitchens, men were getting paid more for similar job grade. This has since been rectified and compensation paid.
- I have felt in a vulnerable position whilst on maternity leave.
- I have felt annoyed at having to make up time because of child's illness, when in other departments or services, other colleagues haven't. This is more a problem with management rather than a specific gender equality issue.
- There are only two managers in my entire department who are women. It appears to me that women are disadvantaged in gaining promotion.
- I find that in my team, specific people talk down to me because I am female. They don't think I can handle certain tasks.
- Lack of support for men in a parenting role, as no paternity leave is allowed.
- There is a general culture that women are not regarded in the same light as men.
- After applying for a post in social care, I was advised by chair of recruitment panel that although myself and other male applicant were equal in interview and application form, the job was given to the other applicant "because they were male".
- It is discrimination when grown professional women are called "lasses".
- I feel that male dominated jobs (manual, ferries etc) are considered more worthwhile and are better paid than female dominated admin/business support jobs, which are undervalued and are lower paid despite the amount of education and experience needed to fulfil them.
- I could not return to my post following maternity leave as I wanted to reduce my hours to 3 days a week instead of full time.
- As a man, I am made to lift anything heavy or move things on behalf of a woman. It is discrimination that there is an expectation that I am to do it when it has nothing to do with me.

### Q3: Training and Development

Respondents were asked if their gender had ever affected their opportunity to take part in training or to develop your full learning potential during their employment with the Council. The responses are below:

	Percentage	Number of Respondents
YES - Positively	0.0%	0
YES - Negatively	2.7%	7
Not sure	14.5%	38
No	80.5%	211
Not Applicable	2.3%	6
Total:		262

Of those who said YES, comments were:

- Having applied for a post that I was fully qualified for as well as having the relevant experience I was not even given an interview. The successful candidate was unqualified and had no previous experience.
- My line manager refused to offer higher level responsibilities on a temporary basis. A male, full time, more junior colleague took on the tasks instead.
- Permission to attend a short training course was not granted.

### Q4: Promotion of Gender Equality

Respondents were asked if they felt that the Council promoted Gender equality, the responses are summarised below:

	Percentage	Number of Respondents
Does not promote Gender Equality	14.1%	37

Promotes Gender Equality to a satisfactory level	69.2%	182
Actively promotes Gender Equality	16.7%	44
<b>Total</b>		<b>263</b>

#### Q5: Obstacles for Parenting

Respondents were asked if they felt that there were any obstacles that prevent both men and women in a parenting role continuing their employment with the Council. The responses are summarised below:

	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Not Sure</b>	<b>Number of Respondents</b>
Women	20% (50)	43% (108)	37% (93)	251
Men	18% (37)	48% (99)	34% (70)	206
<b>Total</b>				<b>257</b>

Those who said YES, comments were:

- Barriers include lack of adequate childcare and the ability to cover shifts. Direct care posts require staff to leave home about 6am in order to be on shift by 7am. Single parents that have nobody at home to offer support are unable to continue with this work. A council crèche would be a solution.
- Some SIC offices/managers are inflexible in allowing time off for parents. For example, to attend children's appointments, to look after them due to accident/illness, or in the event of bad weather when the schools are closed. For school closures, this flexibility would be to come in half an hour late once childcare has been arranged. This inflexibility is not the case for all management. Some are incredibly flexible and accommodating. The problem is there is no consistency, which leaves parents frustrated and angry.
- Manager cannot accept that male employees can be the main carer in families.
- Men should be able to take part of or even half of the 'maternity leave' .
- Only recently has job share been taken seriously. Even though policy to allow flexibility is in place, the views of managers have been, and still are, a major obstacle. There will always be some male managers with their own strong views on the role of women in the workplace / bringing up children etc, and unfortunately that can be a major stumbling block for career progression for women.
- Parenting breaks should be considered up to 2 years.
- Managers views have a big influence on the support and flexibility parents get. The Council puts a veneer on the support it provides its staff by writing all these policies, but informally staff are put off taking paternity/maternity leave or making use of flexible arrangements.
- Remote working is not as widely accepted as it should be.
- I recently applied for flexible working and was turned down. I have two small children under the age of two. I was told that if I would not work on a Saturday I would lose my job.
- Childcare is a barrier, particularly in rural areas. Crèche and care facilities could also be open longer.
- Childcare provision does not appear to be a priority for the Council.
- Many middle managers express the view that posts cannot be flexible or part-time, for very flimsy service delivery reasons.
- Ability to temporarily reduce hours when returning to work, then reviewing when child reaches nursery/school age would be welcomed.
- Working in Community Care we have to ensure consistency and continuity for our service users. This means it is impossible to meet all flexible working requests. Cover is usually required to maintain staff ratios and comply with terms of registration, and this is hard to find at short notice. Shift work cannot be avoided and people

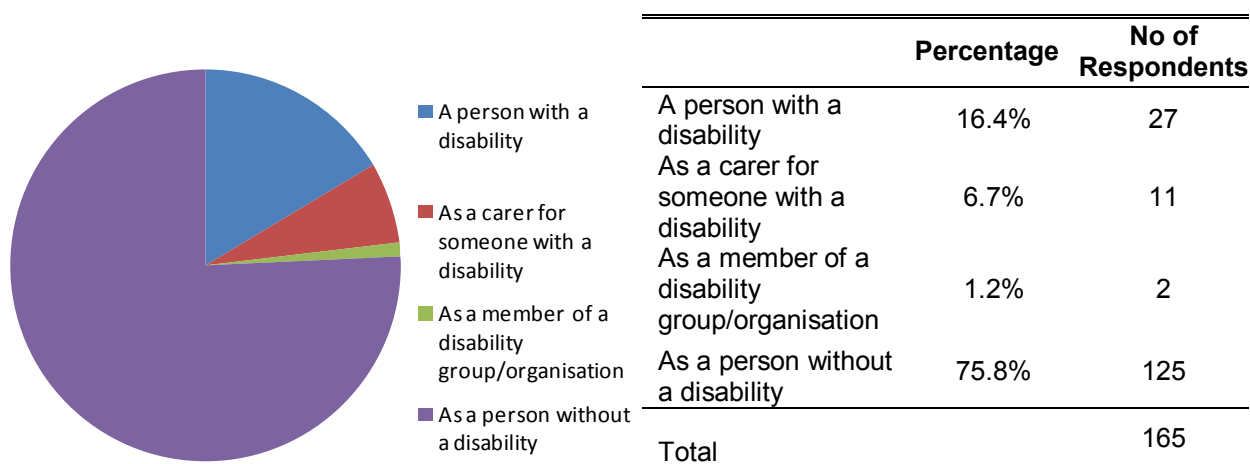
without extended families in the vicinity sometimes have to leave due to the impossibility of finding childcare that fits in with shifts.

- Barriers could be improved through more opportunities to work from home and better provision for childcare.
- There are barriers in social work. The shift work pattern and lack of childcare options for this type of work makes working in this area, if you are a parent, impossible.
- Male employees require better entitlements to parenting leave.
- The lack of sufficient child care to fit around working hours is an issue across Shetland and particularly in rural areas. Childcare and crèche facilities should be open longer and cater for those living in more rural areas.
- Culture is a barrier; the assumption that it is the female who care for children.
- More professional and managerial roles should be open to job share. This would mean that for women, in particular, there would be a reduced barrier to career progression, which is currently a problem and keeps females on lower pay.
- The obstacle is that parenting takes time and energy away from work. This isn't something to be improved. It's normal; it's life.
- It can be difficult to negotiate suitable part time hours on return from maternity leave.
- There will always be obstacles as people will always have situations where work clashes with home life but I believe the Council does all that it can to remove these obstacles and make reasonable adjustments for people.
- I feel that there are discrepancies in the way people are dealt with both between and within departments, and this results from decisions being left to line managers. For example, some people have to make up time if they are off due to their child being sick (which is perfectly reasonable), but others do not. Some people are allowed to leave and pick children up from schools, nursery etc whereas others would have to make up time. This is also unfair for those who don't have children. I feel that there should be some sort of policy in place which ensures all staff are treated equitably.
- The issue of poor childcare in rural areas, combined with poor public transport and current lack of true flexibility regarding remote working is an impossible barrier to overcome.
- Job sharing isn't as widely accepted as a solution as it should be. I understand that more flexible working is harder to manage but it would be of great benefit to employee wellbeing.
- The Council accommodates flexible working where it can, it is just unfortunate that it is not suitable for all types of jobs or work places.
- Flexible working could be more actively promoted in some departments. Inflexibility still exists with regards to what is identified as "Core hours".

## DISABILITY

### Breakdown of responses

Respondents were asked if they had a disability, were a carer of someone with a disability or a member of a disability group or organisation. The results are summarised below:



### Q1: Recruitment and Promotion

Respondents were asked if they, or the person they were representing had ever felt discriminated against in terms of seeking (or in) employment within the Council because of their disability, or felt that their disability has prevented them from gaining a promotion.

	Response Percent	Response Count
YES	16%	15
NO	84%	79
<b>Total</b>		<b>94</b>

The reasons why respondents said yes are given below:

	Percentage	No of Respondents
No suitable positions	9.1%	1
I/they had difficulties with the application form	9.1%	1
The job advertisement directly discriminated against my/their disability	0.0%	0
I/they felt the Council would not accommodate my/their needs during the interview process	9.1%	1
I/they felt discriminated regarding the recruitment decision that was made on the job that I applied for.	18.2%	2
I/they felt the Council would not accommodate my/their needs whilst in employment with the Council	54.5%	6
Other		3
<b>Total</b>		<b>11</b>

Those who said OTHER gave the following reasons:

- Recruitment forms are a nightmare for all.
- Council do not promote employment of disabled people.
- All SIC recruitment involves interviews, which is impossible for some. In theory alternatives can be made available, but this knowledge is not widespread.

## Q2: Reasonable Adjustments

Respondents were asked if the person or group they were representing said that reasonable adjustments were made to accommodate their disability during their employment with the Council.

	Percentage	No of Respondents
YES	70%	35
NO	30%	15
Total		50

For those who said NO, comments were:

- Being dyslexic, employer was reluctant to support me in getting set in place equipment and materials to ensure I was not struggling.
- Adjustments were made by management, but not by peers.
- A potential job applicant for a post in this building was discouraged from applying for that post. The reason given was that their qualifications did not match those required; the real reason expressed in the office was that it was because they would not be able to access the office that they were expected to work in because they used a wheel-chair. Another applicant was excluded from interview because she disclosed a history of mental health problems including depression.
- They tried to make reasonable adjustments, but failed to implement these properly.
- My disabled colleague experiences difficulty in finding secure employment within the Council.
- There is a lack of understanding of mental health and of dyslexia.
- It depends too much on line management. There should be more corporate lead.

## Q3: Further Education, Training Programmes and Work Placements

Respondents were asked if the person group represented felt that there was sufficient support for those with disabilities to enter further education, training programmes or work placements in Shetland.

	Percentage	No of Respondents
YES	34.8%	47
NO	14.1%	19
		<b>135</b>

Of those who said NO, comments were:

- There are not enough personnel in current support agencies, or near enough real employment opportunities for young people with physical and learning disabilities in Shetland. It may seem that there are statistically, but having previously managed a project for people with learning difficulties there is most definitely not in practice. The end result is a high percentage of young adults end up being held back academically, socially and financially from achieving any meaningful or real independence.
- There is a long way to go to implement real, genuine and meaningful support, which is more than lip service to a policy.
- There should be more flexible patterns of work to cater for disability/health issues.
- Moving On cannot provide long term support. HR needs to take more initiative in creating jobs for people with disabilities.
- There is support for those with physical disabilities, but support for mental disability is lagging far behind in both awareness and ability to support.
- The remoter and more sparsely populated areas of Shetland do not always have the same access.
- Management lack training and empathy when it comes to dealing with disabled staff.

- There are fewer opportunities to access and more hurdles to jump to gain access to college courses or work placements.

#### Q4: Monitoring Protected Characteristics

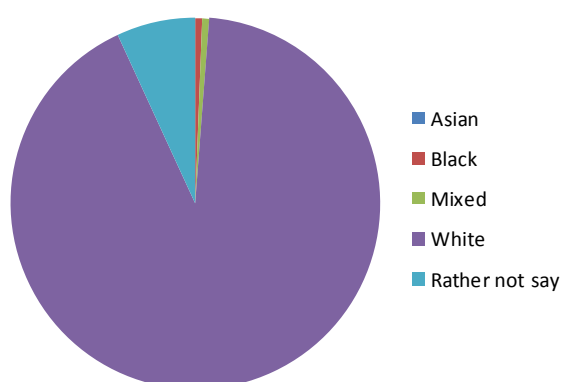
Respondents were asked if they thought it appropriate that the Council's Employee Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form asks individuals to disclose whether they have a disability or not.

	Percentage	No of Respondents
YES	83.3%	115
NO	16.7%	23
<b>Total</b>		<b>135</b>

### RACE

#### Breakdown of Respondents

Respondents were asked to describe which race they felt they were. The responses are below:



	Percentage	No of Respondents
Asian	0.0%	0
Black	0.6%	1
Mixed	0.6%	1
White	92.0%	160
Rather not say	6.9%	12
Other		3
<b>Total</b>		<b>174</b>

Of those who said other, these included:

- Scots (a race rather than a colour)
- Chinese
- Human

#### Q1: Recruitment and Promotion

Respondents were asked if they had ever felt discriminated against in term of seeking employment within the Council because race, or felt that race had prevented them from gaining a promotion.

	Percentage	No of Respondents
YES	5.4%	9
NO	94.6%	158
<b>Total</b>		<b>167</b>

Those who said that they had been discriminated against gave the following reasons:

	Percentage	No of Respondents
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The job advertisement directly discriminated against my race	0.0%	0
I have felt discriminated against whilst in an interview, because of my race	0.0%	0
I have felt discriminated against regarding the recruitment decision that was made on the job that I applied for, because of my race	100.0%	5
Other (please specify)		3
<b>Total</b>		<b>5</b>

Other reasons were:

- There are very few managers in my department and none in my entire building who are Shetlanders. It appears to me that Shetlanders face discrimination in gaining promotion.
- I have felt as someone who is not a Shetlander that my nationality has gone against me in the way I have been treated.

## Q2: Employment

Respondents were asked if they had ever felt discriminated against during employment with the Council because of race. The results are summarised below:

Answer Options	Percentage	No of Respondents
YES	6.8%	11
NO	93.2%	151
<b>Total</b>		<b>162</b>

Of those who answered YES, the following reasons were specified:

- I was picked on at school because I was a "soothmoother".
- Non-native islanders are implied in a derogatory manner.
- People of the Shetlander race don't seem to get any "high up officials' jobs" or teaching jobs. They are mostly given to incomers.
- I received racial abuse from member of the public, which was not taken seriously enough by management.
- Senior Management presumed that because I was English I would struggle to understand what was said as they were going to speak in Shetland dialect. The fact that I've lived here most of my life didn't seem to register.
- It is my strong impression that Shetlanders will discriminate positively for other Shetlanders at the expense of other people with more talent.
- Not being from Shetland is a big barrier to employment.

## Q3: Training, Development and Learning

Respondents were asked if they felt that their race had affected their opportunity to take part in training or to develop their full learning potential during employment with the Council.

	Percentage	No of Respondents
YES - Positively	0.0%	0
YES - Negatively	1.8%	3
Not sure	7.3%	12
No	88.4%	145
Not Applicable	2.4%	4
<b>Total</b>		<b>164</b>

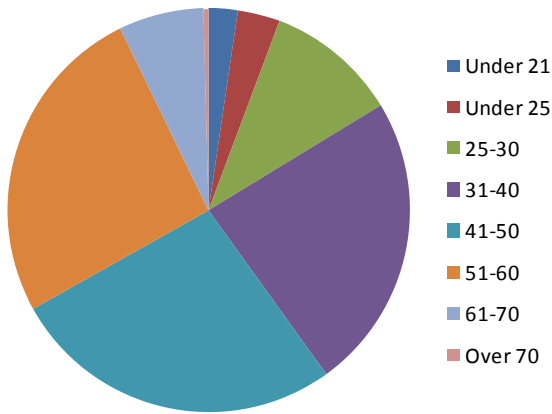
Of those who said it had affected their opportunity, comments were:

- I am sure incomers to Shetland would get sent on any training they wanted, Shetlanders may not get the same treatment.

## AGE

### Breakdown of Responses

Respondents were asked to select which age group they fell into:



	Percentage	No of Respondents
Under 21	2.3%	6
Under 25	3.4%	9
25-30	10.6%	28
31-40	23.8%	63
41-50	26.8%	71
51-60	26.0%	69
61-70	6.8%	18
Over 70	0.4%	1
<b>Total</b>		<b>265</b>

### Q1: Recruitment and Promotion

Respondents were asked if they had ever felt discriminated against in terms of seeking employment within the Council because of age, or felt that age had prevented them from gaining a promotion. The results are detailed below:

	Percentage	No of Respondents
YES	11.9%	31
NO	88.1%	229
<b>Total</b>		<b>260</b>

Those who felt they had been discriminated against gave the following reasons:

	Percentage	No of Respondents
The job advertisement directly discriminated against my age	0.0%	0
I have felt discriminated against whilst in an interview, because of my age	22.7%	5
I have felt discriminated against regarding the recruitment decision that was made on the job that I applied for, because of my age	77.3%	17
Other (please specify)		7
<b>Total</b>		<b>22</b>

Of those who stated OTHER, comments were:

- I was told, bluntly, when enquiring about a post, that they hadn't thought anyone my age would apply.
- I think ageism does exist to some extent in some pockets/areas, even although no one would ever admit to it. More work needs to be done here to change attitudes, as there is going to more older people than younger people in the workforce from now on. It's the attitudes that need to change.
- Age bias exists in recruitment, notably in care.

- I have been told that further training would be a waste of time at this stage in my career.
- I have felt that young people are best working with other young people in some areas of care.
- I felt "put off" applying for anything new, as younger supervisors assumed I had reached my level and wouldn't want to develop further. This was in the time before employee development review meetings.
- I have felt that my age has counted against me in gaining recognition.

### Q2: Employment

Respondents were asked if they had ever felt discriminated against during their employment with the Council because of age.

	Percentage	No of Respondents
YES	7.9%	20
NO	92.1%	233
<b>Total</b>		<b>253</b>

Of those who felt they had been discriminated against, the following reasons were given:

- When I was younger, at 21, I felt discriminated against applying for posts as I was deemed to be overqualified (Degree) and under experienced in the workplace.
- Being a young teacher sometimes means members of staff treat me differently and I am perceived differently by members of the public.
- Training I want to do is not considered as I am thought of as being too old
- I have been told that further training would be a waste of time at this stage in my career.
- I felt that because I was older than established members of my team, that when I first started working in Shetland they were very unwilling to really provide me with the support needed to integrate me within their team.
- Assumptions made by management in terms of ability based on age (In this instance assuming younger was better).
- Both my age and gender held me at a disadvantage.
- Assumption that I was happy in the job I had and wouldn't want to develop further. This was in the days before Employee Dev Review meetings were held. Had to move out of the department you were in to get any promotion.
- Assumptions are made about older staff members, in terms of their approach to their work. I have heard remarks regarding care standards and principles which implied that older staff were stuck in their ways and unable to follow care standards.
- People over a certain age appear less likely to get to interview.
- General dogsbody in office workplace because your youngest of the group.
- I feel my manager treats me differently to everyone else because of my age.

### Q3: Training, Development and Learning

Respondents were asked if they felt that their age had affected their opportunity to take part in training or to develop their full learning potential during their employment with the Council.

	Percentage	No of Respondents
YES - Positively	1.6%	4
YES - Negatively	3.2%	8
Not sure	13.9%	35
No	79.8%	201

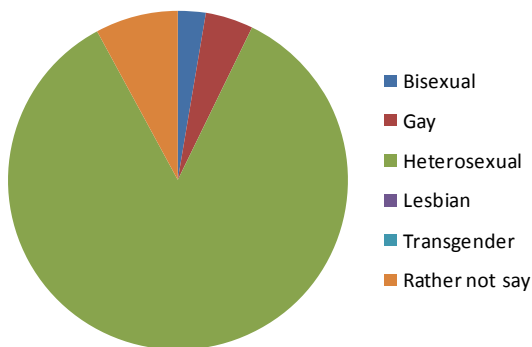
Not Applicable	1.6%	4
<b>Total</b>		<b>252</b>

Of those who said YES, they gave the following explanation:

- I was told it would be a waste of time.
- I had difficulty using the SVQ computer based format. Also all the jargon. I think I would have managed better if I had been a school leaver, as I would have had previous exposure to both.
- Again I think if you are older, it easy to be passed over for training and development - which is totally unacceptable, but I think it does exist in this organisation in some places.
- Seeing younger people get the chance of going on courses that would be appropriate for me too.
- Again, assuming that you are unlikely to be able to develop further in the department...when senior staff are younger.
- No account is taken of previous educational attainments and even graduates are expected to start by doing SVQ2 and, in adult services, have to prove they are capable of studying at HNC level, before being offered level 3. Most senior posts/secondment opportunities go to people in their twenties.

## SEXUAL ORIENTATION

### Breakdown of Responses



	Percentage	No of Respondents
Bisexual	2.6%	4
Gay	4.6%	7
Heterosexual	84.9%	129
Lesbian	0.0%	0
Transgender	0.0%	0
Rather not say	7.9%	12
<b>Total</b>		<b>152</b>

### Q1: Recruitment and Promotion

Respondents were asked if they had ever felt discriminated against in terms of seeking employment within the Council because of their sexual orientation, or felt that your sexual orientation has prevented them from gaining promotion.

	Percentage	No of Respondents
YES	0.7%	1
NO	91.9%	137
Not Applicable	7.4%	11
<b>Total</b>		<b>149</b>

Of the one person who said YES, the following reason was given:

- I have felt discriminated against regarding the recruitment decision that was made on the job that I applied for, because of my sexual orientation

## Q2: Employment

Respondents were asked if they felt they had ever felt discriminated against during employment with the Council because of sexual orientation.

	Percentage	No of Respondents
YES	2.0%	3
NO	98.0%	144
<b>Total</b>		<b>147</b>

Of those who said YES, the following reasons were stated:

- Often a bias shown to make up the numbers of gay staff to make the organisation feel good rather than give the position on merit.
- Not myself, but have seen others being picked on by peers.
- But a colleague is often, subtly, insulted or is the target of jokes.
- However have had to defend several staff when colleagues and family carers have displayed prejudice.

## Q3: Training, Development and Learning

Respondents were asked if their sexual orientation had affected their opportunity to take part in training or to develop full learning potential during employment with the Council.

	Percentage	No of Respondents
YES - Positively	0.0%	0
YES - Negatively	0.0%	0
Not Sure	5.4%	8
NO	90.6%	135
Not Applicable	4.0%	6
<b>Total</b>		<b>149</b>

The one respondent show said YES gave the following reason:

- But again, my colleague probably struggles to achieve his full potential because of an undercurrent of snide, sexual-orientation-related comments from a couple of colleagues, which affects the environment within the team

## Q4: Equality Monitoring

Respondents were asked if they thought that the Council's Employee Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form should include questions about an individual's sexual identity. The responses are below:

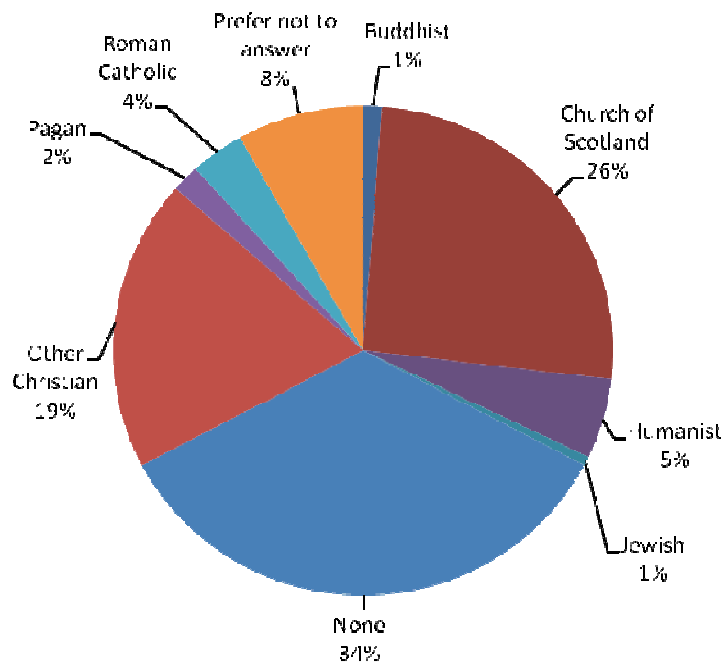
	Percentage	No of Respondents
YES	24.7%	36
NO	75.3%	110
<b>Total</b>		<b>146</b>

## **RELIGION OR BELIEF**

### Breakdown of Responses

Respondents were asked to indicate their Religion or Belief. The results are below:

	Percentage	No of Respondents
Buddhist	1.2%	2
Church of Scotland	25.7%	44
Hindu	0.0%	0
Humanist	5.3%	9
Jewish	0.6%	1
Muslim	0.0%	0
None	34.5%	59
Other	19.3%	33
Christian		
Sikh	0.0%	0
Pagan	1.8%	3
Roman Catholic	3.5%	6
Prefer not to answer	8.2%	14
Other:		9
<b>Total</b>		<b>171</b>



Of those who said OTHER, these included:

- Atheist
- Christian
- Church of England
- Just a spiritual person, which encompasses a few of the religions/systems above but is not a belief system that can be labelled.
- Methodist
- Presbyterian
- Scottish Episcopalian
- Strongly Atheist

#### Q1: Recruitment and Promotion

Respondents were asked if they felt that they had ever felt discriminated against in terms of seeking employment within the Council because of their religion or beliefs, or felt that their religion or beliefs has prevented them from gaining promotion. The responses are below:

	Percentage	No of Respondents
YES	1.2%	2
NO	92.9%	156
Not Applicable	6.0%	10
<b>Total</b>		<b>168</b>

Of the two respondents who answered YES, comments were:

- I have felt discriminated against whilst in an interview, because of my religion or beliefs
- At work

Q2: Employment

Respondents were asked if they had ever felt discriminated against during their employment with the Council because of their religion or beliefs.

	Percentage	No of Respondents
YES	2.4%	4
NO	97.6%	163
<b>Total</b>		<b>167</b>

Of those that said YES, comments were:

- Being forced to work on Good Friday and Easter Monday
- Obligated to participate in school assemblies

Q3: Training, Development and Learning

Respondents were asked if their religion or beliefs had ever affected their opportunity to take part in training or to develop their full learning potential during their employment with the Council. The responses are below:

	Percentage	No of Respondents
YES - Positively	0.0%	0
YES - Negatively	1.2%	2
Not sure	6.0%	10
No	89.3%	150
Not Applicable	3.6%	6
<b>Total</b>		<b>168</b>

Of the two respondents who said YES, one of them gave the following explanation:

- I have church commitment in the early evening which means that I sometimes cannot attend training or evening meetings which has resulted in a negative reaction from my boss.

Q4: Equality Monitoring

Respondents were asked if they had ever felt discriminated against in terms taking advantage of flexible arrangements to accommodate time off for days of worship and religious festivals whilst in employment with the Council. The responses are below:

	Percentage	No of Respondents
YES	6.7%	11

NO	93.3%	154
If Yes, please give details		13
<b>Total</b>		<b>165</b>

Of the respondents who said YES, comments were:

- Do think that religion and the workplace should not mix religion is a personal issues that does not affect work therefore no time of/praying facilities needed
- School holidays no longer include Good Friday every year
- Good Friday and Easter Monday are no longer always school holidays
- There is not enough recognition of the importance of Easter, the public holiday is on the Monday and this does not reflect the importance of Good Friday. In fact what does the Monday have to do with Easter? Traditionally it was Friday that was the holiday.
- But I can't see why the Council can insist on a Christmas shutdown and Easter public holiday - I can see why people would be annoyed with this.
- I object to having to work Good Friday - even though I'm not a Christian, this is supposedly a predominantly Christian country & Good Friday is supposed to be the most important day in the Christian calendar. Christmas is universally observed but Easter has been marginalised by those who wish to impose standardised school terms.
- Up helly aa public holiday - Not everyone actually needs to recover; offices could be manned by people who don't celebrate.
- I would assume that i would not be allowed to attend church without taking it off as leave. Quite frankly i find it strange that we don't celebrate easter and even are aware that there are days to celebrate. its almost like it doesnt exist. The rest of the united kingdom does acknowledge these dates and so do our calendars. You should look at it not everyone is a pagan.
- A negative reaction from my boss when asking for flexi-leave for such church activities has occurred.
- Didn't know this was possible. Would feel awkward about what others would think about this.
- Did not know that you could have flexible arrangements for this. Have not been made aware of this fact
- Easter week
- I don't necessarily agree with religious folks getting special days off just because they believe in this god fellow. But I have no problem with them taking a flexi/holiday day off for this. Council should not bend over backwards for any beliefs; we're all the same.

Respondents were asked if they thought that the Council's Employee Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form should include questions about an individual's religion and belief. The responses are below:

	Percentage	No of Respondents
YES	34.9%	58
NO	65.1%	108
<b>Total</b>		<b>166</b>

## OTHER COMMENTS

Respondents were asked to leave any concerns or comments relating to Equalities which they felt had not been covered:

### Age

- I find doing this questionnaire that a lot of what could be asked is missed out. Some things are not relevant and some things are important so that people are treated the same but not judged on what they believe or don't. Treating each other fairly is very important where ever they come from. I have seen people getting jobs in Shetland who were never trained or earned the right to have the job. Highly paid jobs in the times that we live in or actually in any time there should be fairness and openness.
- SIC never gives young people a chance and regularly give jobs to older people or employ people from out with Shetland instead. as a result Shetland are losing all their skilled young people and the population is ageing because of this

### Belief

- I have occasionally had concerns around being asked to participate in religious (Christian) services while I am at work that are organised for the benefit of clients. I would prefer not to take part or enter into any discussion about the reasons.
- This is still a very Christian dominated organisation and we need to ensure that all religions are treated with respect and tolerance. This must include belief systems like Atheism rather than 'religions'.

### Carers

- Flexitime seems geared towards folk with kids, which isn't really fair. Those of us who don't have children don't get the same allowance i.e. working all 37 hours in 4 days and having the 5th off is usually only really available to workers with kids. I'd like to do this, but because I don't have children I don't think I'd be allowed to.
- I feel that the Council as a whole is a flexible and supportive employer. My workplace manager is particularly helpful on occasions when I have needed time off for personal or family reasons. The Single Status agreement offers flexitime which suits my parenting needs. I am glad that the Council recognises that many men are also involved in child care and parenting issues; and offers a flexible approach which I genuinely appreciate. In return I am happy to work flexible work hours.
- My experience shows me that many managers are completely set in their ways and refuse to consider flexible working as an option for staff with parental responsibilities. This view is often made explicit and the culture of institutionalised disapproval of change, particularly in relation to changing family circumstances, means that some staff leave rather than continue in their employment when they have children. This means that the organisation loses corporate memory, skills and experience that take years to build up again. In that intervening period, the organisation is less efficient and effective.
- Paternity and maternity leave could be improved on. Less notice could be given for periods of absence fro e.g. settling a preschool child into nursery etc.

### Employment

- At times senior members of staff do not always treat lesser qualified members of staff in the same way as their work peers.
- equal ops is in many ways not adhered to in the spirit of equality only the over complicated policy to keep senior management believing they are applying the rules fairly when in fact we have a poor record in all departments in taking on the clear bias that often exists in the workplace.
- I have omitted the other questions as I have no disabilities, no hang-ups about religion, gender , age, politics etc. To date I have experienced no issues against any of these so nothing to draw on.

- I have 'skipped' various sections as I felt they did not apply to me. I have never felt discriminated against in the council's employ
- I think that, as an employer, the Council should have a full knowledge of their employees
- I would like more information/guidance issued relating to how equality relates to part-time employees. I assume part-time employees have the same rights as full-time but am unsure, and I have felt a bit discriminated against because I am part-time (eg what happens if you are ill on a day you are due to work - a supervisor said you can be made to work another day instead which I would question as I can't see a full-time employee being told that they have to work at the weekend instead if they are ill during the week?).
- Peoples racial, personal, sexual or religious beliefs should never affect their ability to do carry out the duties of their post in a unprofessional manner . If they feel it does conflict with their personal life they should seek to be redeployed (if extreme circumstances) or apply for another post.
- Sexuality section did not give the opportunity to comment generally - council does at times struggle to be inclusive in terms of lesbian and gay relationships
- while we have a bank of policy and procedure, there is always discrimination because of human prejudice - equalities and ethical practice training key to challenging those prejudices

### **Gender**

- I have concerns that the number of senior managers in the council who are male outnumber women and that the senior women are in the "caring" sections of the council. This is commented on by Councillors when the statistics are printed (often excuses why this happens) but there doesn't seem to be any action taken to remedy this.
- I have on occasion come across a lack of taking into account fully comments made by women within meetings which are predominantly male orientated, however I have also experienced meetings where this has been the reverse, I think there needs to be an equal gender base at some meetings to ensure an accurate reflection of all individual comments.
- I think that SIC takes equality issues seriously and that it is right to collect data on all equality issues as long as respondents are offered a prefer not to say option and that they should be allowed to keep their anonymous.
- it saddens me that there seems to be no vehicle for men seeking equal pay to other men, but there seems to be help in abundance for women seeking equal pay to men
- Men and women seem to be treated differently.

### **General**

- I am entirely fed up of being asked on every CHRIS form, every year, and on every training course, about my race and gender. I now refuse to answer. Surely HR could just send out an email saying 'has anything changed ... Yes or No. It's very tiresome and a waste of time and paper.
- I strongly feel that my religion, sexual orientation and ethnic origin have no connection to my ability to do my job. I feel giving answers to these questions will discriminate against me as I fail to belong to any minority and therefore will fail to tick the correct boxes when decisions are being made to allocate, training, jobs etc.
- I think that discrimination is not too much of a problem for the Council. However, I recognise that the Council cannot be complacent about it and should continue to monitor, promote and improve this areas for all staff or potential staff.
- I think that Shetland islands council have a whole bunch of policies relating to a whole set of different issues, but that these are not always compatible with each other.
- I think that the SIC don't have anything to worry about equality and diversity. There is too much hype about all this kind of carry on. I think people should just get over it and get on with it!!

- I think the council say the right things but can't enforce their ambitions. There is still a general prejudice amongst it's staff which is being ignored. Some people are ignorant because they choose to be.
- I think there is equal opportunities for everyone working for the SIC. It's a good and including employer.
- I work in a school. Often when Head Teachers / Teachers refer to "staff" they mean teaching staff, tending to disregard non-teaching staff as if they do not exist. This is probably less prevalent than it used to be. However when we're hearing about, for example, Scalloway Secondary department's possible closure all concern for future jobs is centred on teachers but not the support staff.
- It's OK for monitoring forms to ask about these issues as long as there is a 'rather not say' option.
- launch crew formal proposal is discriminatory towards deckhands, also Ports and harbours management have not followed due process with regard to how a job overview is done, this may result in a formal collective grievance.
- Need to be careful not to indirectly discriminate against older applicants because they have higher qualifications or more qualifications than the job requires.
- No concerns
- Over use of equality forms linked to the SIC Training application form, employees should only fill these out when applicable. Recruitment should highlight whether someone has a disability that affects their work or if restrictions are required.
- Sometimes feel that the 'average', 'normal' persons needs are ignored
- This seems to be an exercise in positive discrimination. There should be NO equality monitoring of any time as it is a waste of SIC time and resources.
- Too much emphasis is put on discrimination issues which ends up meaning that the white, middle aged, straight, able-bodied male is at a disadvantage because boxes need to be ticked to show that we are not discriminating against other groups.
- We definitely have more work to do in this area, re attitudes to ageism. The sooner we start the better as it's not going to go away.
- Whatever the policy is, it is often really down to the individual attitudes of the people you work with.
- When applying for jobs in Lerwick you are more likely to get considered if you stay in or around Lerwick, have had past experience of this being a ferry user, considered not so reliable during the winter months.
- Women are still discriminated against particularly in regard to pay for manual work. Single Status has only made the pay gap bigger. Working mothers do not fare well either in regard to days when schools are closed due to snow. These usually mean that childcare is not available for the same reason and we have to lose pay to stay home with our children. Only managers etc seem to have access to remote working so they don't lose pay whereas I don't so I have to use a day's leave. As usual the top brass come out smelling of roses rather than the ordinary working woman/man.

#### **Race**

- The council is often asking to describe their nationality. The term 'British' seldom appears as an option on such documents. It should.

#### **Race/Gender**

- There is a perception that, whilst there is little overt discrimination at most levels in SIC, there is a reduced chance of landing a top job unless you are a white man in a grey suit. Don't think Shetland is alone in this!

#### **Race/Nationality**

- Discrimination relating to race may not occur directly or openly. Many indigenous Shetlanders have concerns that their continued use of the Shetland dialect affects their work related opportunities.
- I am very wary of constantly being asked to describe race and nationality for

myself and also my children. I feel this creates divisions where they don't exist.

### **Recruitment**

- If we want to encourage and actively promote pay equality, then women should have an equal opportunity to apply for higher paid professional and managerial posts without sacrificing their parental role to a full time job. There needs to be a far greater number of part-time and job share posts available in the Council. No posts (or very few) should be exempt from job share.
- More care should be taken to ensure that people are considered on their merits by avoiding situations where friendships/affiliations might cloud judgement. Where possible, interviews should be conducted by people not known to the candidates and short listing should be handled anonymously i.e. with candidates' names blanked out.
- The multi-cultural, plural society model is applied perfectly well within SIC. The discrimination that I've seen with my own eyes are appointment decisions being made before interview, appointments being made for people who do not meet all the essential criteria
- The situation regarding the appointment of Shetlanders or friends of Shetlanders in favour of others needs addressing

### **Training and Development**

- The Social Care sector promotes certain training courses which are mandatory for health and Safety, and with this economic climate training in other aspects which are much more important is being denied to Care workers. In the Education department training with regard to teaching skills are promoted however knowledge skills in subject areas is not.
- Training seems to be erratic to say the least as some employees can get nearly a year off work to undertake their studies whilst others get little or no time off.